

At a time of economic anxiety, the most important thing is to ensure that growth remains strong, so that opportunities can be creative. If we look at what has been our biggest source of strength in recent months, it has been export-led growth. Over the last year, there have been dire predictions for GDP growth, and every single quarter the numbers have come out much stronger than has been anticipated because exports have made up for softer areas within our own economy.

At the same time, Madam Speaker, imports have ensured that working families have access to the goods they need at prices that they can afford. We are weathering these economic challenges because we are engaging in the worldwide marketplace.

India has been a very important component of that engagement. Our exports to India have doubled in the last 5 years. We are India's largest trading partner and largest investment partner. Trading with India has opened up new doors for American producers, service providers, workers and consumers as well.

But India still has miles to go in its reform process. Tariffs in many sectors are prohibitively high. The regulatory environment is absolutely Byzantine. American investors looking for opportunity in an otherwise ripe environment still confront significant roadblocks to successful investment.

If we are to maximize the benefits of trade with the world's second-largest consumer market, there must be broad, comprehensive reform. Free trade negotiations would provide maximum leverage for encouraging this kind of reform. Whether it's slashing exorbitant tariffs, which average 20 percent and range as high as 210 percent, Madam Speaker, that's a 210 percent tariff, protecting intellectual property, and another thing they have done is ensuring transparency in governance, a free trade agreement would provide the necessary impetus for comprehensive liberalization of their economy.

Many of our FTAs are negotiated with foreign policy concerns chiefly in mind. Our pending FTA with Colombia, for example, will solidify strong democratic institutions for a key ally in a key region, in addition to the economic benefits to both countries.

There are certainly foreign policy concerns associated with a U.S.-India free trade agreement as well. It would provide an opportunity to deepen and broaden our ties with a strong, stable Asian democracy that shares our fundamental values in a challenging region.

But Madam Speaker, the commercial benefits to such an FTA would be considerable. It would open up a tremendous opportunity to build upon our export-led growth and ensure that Americans can take full advantage of the more than 1 billion consumers in the world's second-largest emerging market. With all eyes on the economy, now is the time for the U.S. and India to

begin to pursue comprehensive economic engagement with a free trade agreement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURGESS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONAWAY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE TRAGIC MISADVENTURE IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SESTAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESTAK. Madam Speaker, in the wake of the 9/11 attacks against the United States, I was sent on the ground for a short period of time to Afghanistan. As a Navy admiral, I saw what needed to be accomplished. Eighteen months later, I returned on the ground and saw what had not been done because we tragically changed the focus of our attention and our resources to Iraq.

Now, Afghanistan has become once again prey to terrorists and the Taliban have moved back into the southern ungoverned regions and the provinces.

Because of this failure to have our legal or political or security structures there that we were trying to support be established, we were unable to have economic activity, the education take root so that we would be able to harness the efforts to have livelihoods established and an infrastructure in place, to overcome what General Eikenberry, our U.S. commander who was the NATO commander earlier last year said, "Where the road ends, the Taliban begin."

Secretary of Defense Gates has recently said that we will place 3,000 troops into Afghanistan because of the possible spring offensive of the

Taliban. That is too little and way too late.

We have to be able to bring the infrastructure into those ungoverned regions so the Taliban once again cannot provide a safe haven for al Qaeda, that is presently in a safe haven because of this tragic misadventure in Iraq, within Pakistan.

But more to my point today, I do not understand the criticism of a very good Secretary of Defense, Secretary Gates, that the United States wants to point at NATO and say you have not met your commitment in Afghanistan when, in fact, potentially a little known fact is that the United States itself has not met its own requirement for trainers and mentors of the Afghanistan National Army and the Afghanistan National Police. In fact, we are 63 percent short of our goal. That's 2,400 troops.

It all began in Afghanistan. And if we are to look back there 2 years from now and another tragedy would have been planned by the al Qaeda in another safe haven, whether Pakistan or Afghanistan, how can we say, as a senior commander said, "In Iraq we do what we must; in Afghanistan we do what we can?"

The right strategic template is as Winston Churchill said, "Sometimes it's not enough to do your best; sometimes you have to do what is required."

It is required to ensure that the education, the economic activity, the wells, the reconstruction can be accomplished, but you can only do that in a secure enough environment. That, again, is one of the tragedies of this misadventure of Iraq.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SURVEILLANCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Madam Speaker, this afternoon we find ourselves in what only can be described as ominous circumstances.

In 2 weeks, our Nation will no longer be able to conduct critical surveillance